



## THE SCHWARTZ ROUNDS PROGRAM AT DONOR NETWORK WEST: A DECADE OF COMPASSION IN ACTION

Since 2016, Donor Network West (DNW), a California-based organ procurement organization, has implemented the Schwartz Rounds® program as a cornerstone of their organizational culture. Led by facilitator Gwenn Silva, the program has become an essential support system for staff who face the unique challenges of working with death and trauma daily.

As Gwenn explains, “Every single day, all of our people are looking at death, whether it’s on a piece of paper or through a phone call or in front of a person talking with them, because one of their loved ones has died.”

The organization deals regularly with traumatic deaths from homicide, suicide, and sudden medical events. “We’re dealing not only with death, but we’re also dealing with trauma,” Gwenn says.

To help their staff with this stressful environment, DNW has held Schwartz Rounds sessions every other month. Sessions have included reading appreciation letters from organ recipients and discussions about challenging scenarios. This balance between heavier and lighter topics helps staff process their experiences without becoming overwhelmed.

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The program draws staff from across all departments, from front desk receptionists to surgeons. “About 98% of our 500 staff members are on board,” Gwenn says. She uses display screens, emails, flyers and word-of-mouth to spread the word about the sessions.

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The program serves a dual purpose as both organizational support and self-care: “Taking this hour out of your week is self-care. And we need to be focused on ourselves as much as we’re focused on the people that we’re serving.”

To learn more about bringing the Schwartz Rounds program to your organization, visit [theschwartzcenter.org](http://theschwartzcenter.org)